

United States
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Lassen
National
Forest

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Date: October 16, 1996

Subject: Dwarf Mistletoe on the Cottonwood Burn (NE96-14)

To: District Ranger, Sierraville RD, Tahoe NF

On July 24, 1996 I evaluated a small portion of the area burned by the 1994 Cottonwood Fire for dwarf mistletoe. I found a number of infected, mature, Jeffrey/ponderosa pine within the burned perimeter growing over healthy Jeffrey/ponderosa seedlings. Most of the dwarf mistletoe was in the lower branches and could easily be pruned from the overstory trees. Pruning will reduce the severity of the dwarf mistletoe in the overstory, and protect many of the seedlings from the disease. Without controlling the dwarf mistletoe in the overstory, most of the pine seedlings within sixty feet of infected overstory trees will eventually become infected. Dwarf mistletoe can then spread tree-to-tree in the young pine at a rate of a few feet per year.

Dwarf mistletoe is recognized as the single-most destructive pathogen of commercially valuable coniferous timber trees in western United States. Heavily infected pine seedlings often experience high mortality and heavily infected pine stands experience significant growth reduction. Heavily infested stands also experience higher levels of mortality from drought, insects and disease.

I met with Steve Weaver, District Silviculturist on October 10 and discussed the value of dwarf mistletoe control on the Cottonwood Burn. He was very much interested in controlling dwarf mistletoe in the surviving pine since there is a lot of natural pine regeneration that will be infected if control is not implemented. In addition, pine plantations in the burn are scheduled for the future. Steve is supportive of me doing a presuppression survey to support future control projects. He said he would be unable to do the work since his crews were already fully committed to other projects.

I estimate that a presuppression survey would take six to eight weeks to complete. This would include designing the survey, evaluating the complete perimeter of the 46,800 acre burn, evaluating the pockets of live pine in the interior of the burn, GPS mapping of dwarf mistletoe infestations, and preparing a report and project proposal. This could be completed in the 1997 field season if FPM funding is approved. If you have any questions, please contact me at (916) 257-2151 or DG: B.WOODRUFF:R05F06A.

Bill Woodruff

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